

## **The Beautiful Character of the Prophet ﷺ**

*Translated Excerpts from Imam al-Ghazali's Ihya Uloom Ad-Deen*

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From the noble ahadith, the ulama have gathered the beautiful character traits of the Prophet ﷺ. He ﷺ was distinguished by his exceptional patience, bravery, wisdom in judgment, and unparalleled capacity for forgiveness. He was known for his integrity; his hand never touched a woman outside his immediate family. His generosity was unmatched; he was the most charitable among men, never spending a night with any wealth in his possession. If he received any excess wealth, he sought the poor and needy and gave it away in charity, and he would not return home until he had distributed all of it. With all the provisions Allah ﷻ gifted to him, he would only keep the bare minimum of what would suffice for him for the year, such as dates and wheat, and give the rest away in charity.

He retained one-fifth of what came to him easily, such as dates and wheat, and gave the rest away in charity. Even after storing the provisions, he would continue to give away when asked, preferring others over himself so that he would run out of his basic provisions before the year's end. In addition to his boundless generosity, the Prophet ﷺ was humble and industrious in his daily life. He repaired his shoes, assisted his wives with household tasks, and helped prepare meals by cutting meat. His modesty was unparalleled; he was so humble that he could not stare at anyone for long. He accepted invitations from both slaves and free men and was grateful even for the gift of a sip of milk or the hide of insignificant animals. He would accept gifts but he never used charity for his benefit. He demonstrated humility by allowing his servant to ride behind him on any form of transport.

The Prophet ﷺ was committed to truthfulness, even when it caused him or his companions personal difficulty. In his most difficult moments, when pagans came to make alliances against other pagans, he refused, saying, "I do not take help from those who associate with Allah ﷻ." His anger was only for the sake of his Lord and never for himself.

In retribution from his enemies for even the closest of his companions, he never transgressed the sacred bounds of the Shari'ah, even when it could have benefited his companions. To cope with hunger, he would bind stones to his stomach and eat whatever was available, not refusing gifts and sufficing on the halal. He ate whatever was offered: raisins, plain meat, coarse bread, or just milk, and he would subsist on it. He never ate while leaning or at a high table. The Prophet ﷺ did not eat bread consecutively for three days until he met Allah ﷻ, doing so voluntarily to overpower his *nafs* (desire). He always accepted invitations, regardless of social class. He

attended weddings, participated in funerals, and never feared the enemy, remaining humble and avoiding pride. His speech was eloquent and concise.

Worldly things did not entice the Prophet ﷺ. He wore whatever clothing was available, whether a small sheet, Yemeni cloth, or woollen garments. His ring was made of silver, which he wore on the pinky finger of his right or left hand. He would sometimes travel by horse, camel, mule, donkey, or even barefoot. He would sometimes walk without a shawl, sometimes without a turban, and other times even without a cap. He had a strong affinity for pleasant scents and an aversion to foul odours. The Prophet ﷺ devoted no time to pursuits that were neither for the sake of Allah ﷻ nor for the improvement of the soul. For recreation, he would walk in the gardens of his companions. He did not look down on the poor for their poverty or fear kings for their power. In his interactions, he never treated anyone harshly and readily accepted excuses from others. Occasionally, The Prophet ﷺ would make jokes while avoiding falsehood and often smile without bursting into loud laughter. He would watch innocent sports and games and did not prohibit them from it.

He ﷺ would even race with his wives. When others raised their voices before him, he would remain patient. He would drink camel and goat milk with his family members and never degraded any of them nor raised himself above them. The Prophet ﷺ would travel to distant places to visit the sick. He often sat with the poor and destitute, eating alongside them, and he treated everyone with the respect they were due.

The Prophet ﷺ called all people, regardless of their status, to Allah ﷻ. He ﷺ advised others to perform good deeds and to show kindness to their relatives. He spent his youth in poverty working as a shepherd, being orphaned early in life and losing both his parents during his infancy. He was unlettered and raised amongst an ignorant people, yet Allah ﷻ gathered in him all inward and outward perfections. Allah ﷻ perfected his character and made him an example for all mankind. May Allah ﷻ give us all the providence to obey his commands and follow his teachings.